



Department  
of  
Neighborhood  
Services

-MEDIA ADVISORY-

## Mayor Joins Community Partners In Door-to-Door Effort to Address Nuisance Spike

Innovative canvassing campaign gives residents opportunity to clean up garbage, abandoned vehicles and other rodent hazards before city takes enforcement action

A twelve block area bounded by 27th to 30th streets and Locust to Townsend has become ground zero in a joint citizen-city government drive to get residents to clean-up the nuisance conditions that breed rodents and other related health hazards.

On Wednesday, March 13 at 2:30 p.m., Mayor John Norquist will join Department of Neighborhood Services (DNS) inspectors and outreach workers from Community Partners citizen group in a door-to-door effort to contact residents. The canvassing effort follows 1,000 warning letters mailed to property owners in the area last week and reinforces the same message: that residents need to take the opportunity to clean up nuisances like yard litter and abandoned cars immediately before health hazards grow – and before the city orders professional clean-ups and assesses the cost of those clean-ups to owners' tax bills. The charge ranges between \$50 and \$500.

Working together, DNS and the Mayor's Office used computer mapping software to find the area with the most nuisance or rodent complaints. The city then enlisted the support of Alderwoman Rosa Cameron and more than 2 dozen outreach workers for Community Partners to spread the word in the target area.

### Door-to-Door Effort Against Nuisance Hazards

**When:** 2:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 13, 2002

**Where:** Rear of 2909 N. 29<sup>th</sup> Street

**Who:** Mayor John Norquist  
Alderwoman Rosa Cameron  
Paula Butler, Community Partners  
Neighborhood Services Deputy Commissioner, Skip Seager

**CONTACTS:** Steve Filmanowicz, 286-8531 or Todd Weiler, 708-336  
Neighborhood Services Deputy Commissioner, Skip Seager, 286-2548  
Mayor's Office, Steve Filmanowicz, 286-8531  
Alderwoman Rosa Cameron, 286-2863  
Community Partners, Paula Butler, 397-0294  
DNS Public Information, Todd Weiler 708-3360

Here are some things people can do to prevent the rat problem:

- 1. If it's in your yard, it's your problem.** Regardless of where the garbage came from or who's turn it is to clean up, the yard has to be clean. Landlord's will have to pay the cleanup charge and tenants can face possible eviction for creating a nuisance on the property.
- 2. Place all garbage inside the green carts keeping the lid shut.** Deny rats access to food. Properly wrap waste to prevent animals from accessing it.
- 3. Flush the food.** Rinse food containers and flush small semi-solids and liquid waste down the toilet. Minimize the food waste in the garbage.
- 4. Make it smaller.** Crush and compress containers to maximize space in the cart.
- 5. Paper and plastic.** If no room in the cart, put food refuse in the green cart, and inedible items (cardboard and plastic) in bags on top of the cart. Deny the rat his dinner and he won't be back for breakfast.
- 6. Help a neighbor.** If you are angry about the mess, think how you'll feel when the rats arrive. Rats don't care whose yard they are in. Lend a hand and help yourself to a clean YOUR neighborhood. Pick it up and clean it up.

Today the mayor called on all Milwaukeeans help their fellow neighborhoods.

"Nuisances like abandoned cars and broken bags of garbage are real public health hazards," said Mayor Norquist. "The letters we sent out and the door-to-door canvassing effort give residents an opportunity to keep their neighborhoods clean and safe -- and an opportunity to avoid expensive citations."

Ald. Cameron along with The Dept. of Neighborhood Services as well as the MPD are very determined to gain control and eliminate this massive destruction of our neighborhood. However with your help and assistance as neighbors' we are asking you to please call and notify us of violators who have abandoned cars, airborne domestic garbage and debris accumulation around garbage carts, in the rear and front of yards, streets and alleys. Please join Ald. Cameron and the rest of your neighbors' in taking back our neighborhood from the rodents.

Department of Neighborhood Services Deputy Commissioner Skip Seager said, "Garbage removal is an essential city service and failure to remove the garbage in a timely manner may result in adverse health conditions to the citizens of Milwaukee as well as a potential increase in the rat population. Property owners and tenants need to ensure that all garbage has been removed from the ground. The mild weather this winter has done little to stop the rats from coming back."

Failure to do this may result in forcing the city to take care of the problem, which in turn will cost money. The department of Neighborhood Services is taking complaints at 286-2268. Orders will be issued to the property owner and if no action is taken, in less than a week, a contractor will clean up the debris and the cost will be added to the taxbill.

It is cheaper if everyone lends a hand. Fifteen minutes of time to clean up could be worth hundreds of dollars in the long run. Good tenants will do the right thing and act immediately. Bad tenants should be prepared to pay and face possible eviction. Please do your part in keeping the city clean!

**City Contact Numbers:**

For problems with Garbage Collection or Garbage Carts call the Department of Public Works Sanitation Bureau 286-8282

For problems with garbage debris in yards call the Department of Neighborhood Services 286-2268

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